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UNCLAS DHAKA 001081

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: 2005 U.S. TRADE SHOW - LARGEST EVER

¶1. On February 16-18, Embassy co-hosted with the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh the fourteenth annual U.S. Trade Show. This year's show, held at the Dhaka Sheraton, attracted an estimated 21,000 visitors. Despite political unrest and general strikes during the Trade Show planning period, 75 firms purchased 124 booths at the U.S. Trade Show -- the largest number of booths and the largest number of presenters to date.

¶2. We kicked off our event on the evening of the 15th with a welcome dinner, sponsored by Caterpillar, for participating firms at which Betsy Stillman, Trade Policy Advisor from USTR, delivered the keynote address on corporate responsibility and social change. On the morning of the 16th, Foreign Minister Morshed Khan and the Ambassador, along with representatives of the media and American and local firms, participated in an opening ceremony formally inaugurating the show. The Ambassador's reception held that evening drew over 500 business people and government officials.

¶3. Our informal survey of Trade Show participants indicates that several American firms at the trade show completed sales and/or developed leads that could result in significant sales. A few highlights follow:

-- Caterpillar's local agent expects to sell over \$2.5 million worth of generators as a result of leads developed at the show, while Waukesha's local distributor received initial talks on sale of generators worth \$20 million;

-- Kraft Foods, U.S.A. has leads totaling \$1 million for Tang instant drink;

-- Jordana Color Cosmetics believes its presence at the show will lead to \$100,000 in cosmetics sales;

-- American Aire claims to have developed \$250,000 worth of product leads during the show.

¶4. Numerous visitors stopped by our trade show booth to learn more about purchasing U.S. exports. We distributed hundreds of brochures highlighting the Embassy's commercial services, copies of our newsletter, our Country Commercial Guide, and a flyer on the importance of intellectual property rights to Bangladesh -- all published using BPIF. We expect the number of visitors to the Embassy's Trade Center to increase over the next few months, similar to last year, following this annual outreach event.

¶5. The Trade Show received excellent media coverage. Articles were published in the leading dailies highlighting the significance of the show. The electronic media also telecasted reports on the U.S. Trade Show and commented that the bi-lateral relationship between Bangladesh and U.S. will grow further through participating in this largest ever U.S. Trade Show.

THOMAS